United Nations A/70/113

General Assembly

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Seventieth session
Item 114 (e) of the preliminary list*
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of eighteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 16 June 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session and has the honour to inform him that Germany has presented its candidature for a seat on the Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2018 at the elections to be held during the seventieth session of the Assembly, in 2015.

Therefore, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, the Government of Germany has the honour to attach herewith the voluntary pledges of Germany reaffirming its commitment to the promotion of and respect for all human rights and its active engagement in the work of the Human Rights Council (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of Germany would like to request that the present note verbale and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

* A/70/50.

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Please recycle

Annex to the note verbale dated 16 June 2015 from the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidature of Germany to the Human Rights Council, 2016-2018

Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/251

1. The Federal Republic of Germany was a founding member of the Human Rights Council, had a seat on that body from 2006 to 2009, and currently holds one (2013-2015). The Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Office of the United Nations and to the other International Organizations in Geneva, Joachim Rücker, is the elected President of the Human Rights Council for 2015.

2. The Federal Republic of Germany is seeking re-election for a consecutive term to the Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2018. The strong commitment to and respect for all human rights by Germany is demonstrated by the following:

(a) Respect for human rights is of vital importance to the Federal Republic of Germany. The Constitution of Germany, the Basic Law, begins by stating that human dignity shall be inviolable and then goes on to say that the German people acknowledge inviolable and inalienable human rights as the basis of every community;

(b) Germany is a party to the fundamental human rights conventions, which were incorporated into national law following ratification. Germany has entered into extensive commitments to the protection of human rights, and allows their implementation to be monitored at both the national and international levels;

(c) The Government of Germany also feels that it has an obligation to strive to protect and foster respect for human rights throughout the world. It does this by conducting a critical dialogue and by providing concrete support for projects aimed at improving human rights. Human rights and human rights principles are systematically taken into account in German development policy programmes and projects;

(d) Protection and respect for human rights begins in one's own country. Germany regards this as a task that it has to tackle anew every day and it has to allow itself to be judged by how well it does that;

(e) The German Institute for Human Rights, established in March 2001, is the independent "national institute" of Germany for human rights, as required by the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). It monitors the human rights activities of the Government closely and critically. The Government cultivates close contacts with civil society and conducts with it an active discourse on human rights;

(f) The Government regards its human rights policy as a cross-cutting task that affects all areas of society. The realization of article 3 of the Constitution, which states that men and women have equal rights, the development of the national action plan to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, efforts to ensure equal opportunities and participation for people with a migrant

background and the implementation of the national action plan to fight racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and related intolerance are just a few examples of the ongoing commitment of the Government to improving the human rights situation;

(g) The Federal Republic of Germany has been a committed supporter of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms since its establishment. Germany has issued a standing invitation to the special procedures of the Council. It has been the initiator of four mandates of the special rapporteurs on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, and on the right to privacy. Germany has provided a number of fully independent experts who have made substantial and much-recognized contributions within various treaty bodies and in the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee. A leading German expert, Heiner Bielefeldt, is the current Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief.

3. In connection with its candidature to the Human Rights Council, the Government of Germany undertakes to:

(a) Continue to work for the universality and indivisibility of human rights;

(b) Continue actively to advance the implementation of its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the international human rights conventions, the European Convention on Human Rights and other international and regional conventions;

(c) Fulfil its reporting obligations deriving from those conventions, cooperate in a spirit of mutual trust with the treaty bodies, disseminate the concluding remarks of the treaty bodies, examine how to implement them and report on the corresponding implementation steps;

(d) Continue its close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and continue to provide substantial support for its work;

(e) Work towards enabling the Human Rights Council to carry out in full its mandate under General Assembly resolution 60/251, by which the Council was established, and granting national institutions for human rights, within the meaning of the Paris Principles, and civil society their proper place on the Council;

(f) Pursue an active role in the Human Rights Council, in particular by continuing its sponsorship of the mandates of the special rapporteurs on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and on the right to privacy;

(g) Actively seek cooperation in the Human Rights Council on improving the protection of human rights beyond regional frontiers;

(h) Cooperate with the instruments and mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, in particular by upholding its standing invitation to the special rapporteurs and working actively on the universal periodic review.

4. At the national level, the Government of Germany undertakes to:

(a) Ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention) by 2017 at the latest;

(b) Implement and further develop the 2011 national action plan to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, involving civil society in the process on a broad basis;

(c) Implement the strategy on human rights in German development policy;

(d) Develop by 2016 a national action plan on business and human rights to implement the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework, consulting representatives from politics and business, as well as from trade unions, civil society, associations and academia;

(e) Fully implement its plan of action for human rights for the period 2014-2016.

United Nations A/70/114

General Assembly

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23 June 2015

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Seventieth session
Item 99 (d) of the preliminary list*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to promote dialogue and confidence-building in the region and beyond. The thirteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues, held in Jeju, Republic of Korea, served as an important forum for discussing key challenges, at both the global and regional levels, facing the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and such emerging concerns as the development and use of lethal autonomous weapon systems. The Centre held a regional legal assistance workshop in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 18 and 19 November 2014 to facilitate accession to and the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty by States in South-East Asia and the Pacific. It also held a two-day capacity-building workshop on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Arms Trade Treaty in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on 17 and 18 June 2015. In addition, the Centre continued to carry out peace and disarmament education projects. Notably, the Centre's ability to assist Member States in the region was affected by the strong earthquakes that occurred in Nepal on 25 April and 12 May 2015. In order to ensure that the Centre could continue to carry out its planned work programme and operations in a timely and effective manner, it was decided to relocate it to Bangkok for a period of 11 months. That decision was conveyed by note verbale to the Member States in the region. With support from Member States and other partners, the Centre plans to continue expanding its programmes to provide assistance, upon request, to Member States and other stakeholders in the region to strengthen their capacity to implement global agreements in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

* A/70/50.

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The Regional Centre depends solely upon voluntary financial contributions to implement its programmatic activities. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to Member States, including the host country, Nepal, and other partners that have supported the Centre's operations and programmes with financial and in-kind support. He calls upon countries in the region and beyond to make voluntary contributions to the Centre to ensure the sustainability of its activities and operations and to enable it to fulfil the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/39 D, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific is mandated to provide, upon request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by Member States in Asia and the Pacific for the implementation of measures for peace and disarmament through the appropriate utilization of available resources. The Regional Centre facilitates and coordinates the implementation of regional activities of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in Asia and the Pacific.

2. In its resolution 69/68, the General Assembly expressed its satisfaction at the activities carried out in the past year by the Regional Centre and reaffirmed its strong support for the role of the Centre in the promotion of activities of the United Nations at the regional level to strengthen peace, stability and security among the Member States in Asia and the Pacific. It also expressed its gratitude to the Government of the host country, Nepal, for its cooperation and financial support. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its seventieth session on its implementation.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to the above-mentioned request and covers the activities of the Regional Centre during the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre for the first year of the biennium 2014-2015 is contained in the annex to the present report.

II. Activities of the Regional Centre

4. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre focused its programmatic activities on the following areas: promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments, including by assisting national capacity-building; enhancing dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security; and carrying out outreach and advocacy initiatives.

A. Promoting the implementation of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments

5. In the lead-up to the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Regional Centre held a regional legal assistance workshop in Siem Reap, Cambodia, on 18 and 19 November 2014. The workshop focused on facilitating the process of the signature and ratification of and accession to the Treaty. Representatives from 13 Member States in Asia and the Pacific attended the meeting, which was hosted by the Government of Cambodia, with financial and in-kind support from the Governments of Australia and New Zealand. At the workshop, participants assessed the gaps that needed to be addressed in order to align their respective national legislation with the Treaty obligations. International and regional legal experts provided information and insight on the challenges concerning arms export legislation as well as on potential assistance measures.

6. The Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, held a two-day capacity-building workshop on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Arms Trade Treaty on 17 and 18 June 2015 in Dhaka. The workshop brought together 40 government officials from various national ministries and agencies to discuss the policies, practices and technical issues relating to combating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The workshop served to assist Bangladesh in enhancing its national capacity to implement the Programme of Action and to meet the import, export and transfer standards of conventional arms stipulated in the Arms Trade Treaty. In addition, an overview of the International Tracing Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Small Arms Control Standards and the related assessment tool was provided to the participants. The workshop also included technical training focused on the sharing of best practices for the safe management of stockpiles and for recordkeeping with respect to weapons and ammunition. To further ensure long-term sustainability, a package of key background documents on small arms and light weapons was prepared in the national language of Bangla as a resource for government officials. The event was supported financially by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation.

7. The Centre also participated in and contributed substantively to the fifth regional training-of-trainers workshop in the Pacific on the International Small Arms Control Standards and the related assessment tool, held by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in cooperation with the International Small Arms Control Standards Inter-Agency Support Unit and in partnership with regional organizations in Wellington, New Zealand, from 2 to 5 December 2014. The workshop provided training to participants from Pacific island States on the preparation of national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action.

8. In collaboration with the Government of Cambodia, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, supported by the Regional Centre, held a regional workshop on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) for States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) from 15 to 17 October 2014 in Phnom Penh. Special emphasis was given to the effective physical protection and accounting of related materials under the resolution. The regional workshop was realized with the financial support of Norway, the Republic of Korea, the United States of America and the European Union. The workshop brought together participants from government ministries and agencies as well as civil society organizations to discuss key issues, including challenges in the national implementation of the resolution.

9. The Centre also contributed substantively to the regional workshop on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), organized by the Governments of the Philippines and Canada, which was held in Manila on 24 and 25 July 2014. The workshop provided an opportunity to share among participants effective practices for the implementation of the resolution in the region, and facilitated the identification of capacity-building measures that would be responsive to regional and specific national requirements.

B. Promoting dialogue and confidence in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security

10. Continuing the Jeju Process on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, the Regional Centre and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea held the thirteenth United Nations-Republic of Korea Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues, on 4 and 5 December 2014 in Jeju, Republic of Korea. Approximately 50 senior representatives from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, policy institutes and academic institutions participated in the Conference, whose theme was "Looking ahead: opportunities and challenges in disarmament and non-proliferation". The Conference focused on the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, discussing, in particular, possible ingredients for the Treaty's success as well as key challenges. Participants also addressed specific disarmament and non-proliferation concerns of the region. In addition, the Conference addressed the potential dangers of lethal autonomous weapon systems, and the participants debated how to regulate their development and use. The Conference served as an important forum for engaging members of the international disarmament community in frank and informal discussions on key challenges in the areas of disarmament and arms control, contributing to confidence-building as well as to efforts to seek solutions to complex questions in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation.

C. Partnership, outreach and peace and disarmament education

11. The Regional Centre participated in and contributed substantively to the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Hiroshima Training Programme on Nuclear Disarmament for South-East Asia for young diplomats from South-East Asia, which was held in Hiroshima City, Japan, from 8 to 12 June 2015. The Programme was organized as a peace and disarmament education project by UNITAR Hiroshima, in cooperation with UNIDIR, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Japan Foundation and the municipal government of Hiroshima. The Programme provided the participants with a better understanding of global and regional nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues as well as a training opportunity to improve their negotiation skills. In total, 10 junior to mid-level diplomats from five States of South-East Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand) participated in the training programme.

12. From December 2014 to June 2015, the Regional Centre continued its assistance to the Ministry of Education of Nepal in integrating peace and disarmament education into the national curriculum and textbooks. In the framework of phase II of the Peace and Disarmament Programme for Nepal, the Centre organized four workshops, which provided training and technical support for government officials on the development of new peace and disarmament lessons for national grade-nine textbooks, capacity-building for government personnel in charge of preparing peace and disarmament materials, the drafting of a model optional course on peace and disarmament education for middle and high schools and the preparation of peace and disarmament lessons, classroom materials and other teaching tools for a teachers' guide. Those educational initiatives are expected to reach an estimated 400,000 teenagers nationwide per year and help to cultivate and strengthen a culture of peace for future generations.

13. In July 2014, the Regional Centre organized its third children's art competition in Nepal, under the theme "The right to peace", which was based on the United Nations theme for the 2014 International Day of Peace. More than 450 students from six schools in the Kathmandu Valley participated in the competition. The project culminated in an awards ceremony. Through their drawings, the schoolchildren contemplated their personal relationship to peace and conflict, which is an important issue in the transformation of a post-conflict society.

14. The Regional Centre continued its efforts to strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders in the region, including Member States, regional and subregional organizations, other United Nations entities and civil society, through its concerted communications and outreach effort as well as through joint initiatives and collaborative projects. In that context, the Centre enhanced its partnerships with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum through, inter alia, information exchange and invitations to officials of those organizations to events organized by the Centre.

15. The Regional Centre continued its outreach and advocacy efforts to ensure the regular provision of accurate and timely information about its work and about disarmament issues in general, in particular through its website as well as through social media.

D. Future activities

16. The Regional Centre plans to expand the scope of its work programme to provide practical assistance to Member States in the region, at their request, especially in the areas of training, technical assistance and capacity-building, in particular regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action, the Arms Trade Treaty and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Those efforts will include the following:

(a) In order to promote the ratification of and broader accession to the Arms Trade Treaty by States in Asia and the Pacific, as well as its future implementation, the Centre will continue to facilitate regional dialogue on the Treaty and assist States, upon request, in their efforts to prepare for their accession and to build their capacity to implement the Treaty, including through technical and legal assistance;

(b) The Centre will address specific requests of Member States to assist them with their implementation of the Programme of Action, as identified in their relevant submitted national reports;

(c) The Centre plans to continue its support for international efforts to prevent non-State actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, as stipulated in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The Centre will work with States in the region to ensure the submission of initial reports to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and to assist States in developing their national plans to implement the resolution;

(d) The Centre will continue working with Member States in the region to promote dialogue and confidence-building through the organization of the annual major conferences on disarmament, non-proliferation and regional security.

III. Staffing and financing

17. Three posts of the Regional Centre are funded from the regular budget: the Director (P-5) and one Professional (P-3) and one General Service (G-7) staff member. The host country, Nepal, through its voluntary contribution, provided two local support staff. In addition, Japan provided the Centre with one Junior Professional Officer (until the end of October 2014) and, since March 2015, with one United Nations Volunteer. Finland provided one United Nations Volunteer (until 30 September 2014). Switzerland continued to provide one United Nations Youth Volunteer.

18. The Regional Centre relies on voluntary contributions for all of its substantive programmes and for a portion of its operating costs. The Secretary-General encourages other Member States to consider providing financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre.

19. In 2014, voluntary contributions in the total amount of $526,192 were received from Member States. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Member States that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Regional Centre, including Australia, China, Finland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland and Thailand, as well as to Rissho Kosei-kai of Japan. Such financial and in-kind contributions remain essential to ensuring the sustainability of the operations, core activities and programmes of the Centre. The Secretary-General urges all Member States, in particular those from the region, as well as other donors, to provide financial resources in support of the Centre's programmes, which benefit Asia and the Pacific.

IV. Conclusion

20. During the reporting period, the Regional Centre actively engaged in and supported peace and disarmament initiatives in Asia and the Pacific. Working with Member States and other stakeholders, it continued to fulfil its mandate to provide assistance, upon request, to Member States and to carry out outreach and advocacy activities. The Centre will expand the scope of its activities, as feasible, including identifying new and innovative modalities through which to provide practical support to Member States in the region. The annual conference held in the Republic of Korea continues to serve as an important forum for promoting dialogue and confidence-building in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and security. The Centre stands ready to expand its technical assistance to Member States in addressing the challenges they face in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation, as part of the efforts of the United Nations to promote peace, security and disarmament in the region and the world.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for 2014[a]

(United States dollars)

Reserves and fund balance, 1 January 2014	784 968
Income	
Voluntary contributions	526 192[b]
Interest income	4 229
Other/miscellaneous income	12 367[c]
Transfers from other funds	–
Total, income and transfers from other funds	**542 788**
Expenditure	485 295
Programme support costs	56 497
Refunds to donors	–
Total, expenditure and refunds	**541 792**
Reserves and fund balances, 31 December 2014	**785 964[d]**

[a] The status of funds is provided on a provisional basis, pending the release of the final financial statements. The figures provided in the present report are therefore subject to change.

[b] During the reporting period, contributions totalling $526,192 were received from Australia ($69,400), China ($50,000), Kazakhstan ($9,975), Nepal ($208,503), New Zealand ($65,115), the Republic of Korea ($43,600), Switzerland ($43,587) and Thailand ($3,000), as well as the Swiss Agency for Development, ($33,012).

[c] Represents refund of prior-period expenditure.

[d] Consists of reserves and fund balance as at 1 January 2014, plus income received and transfers from other funds in 2014, less expenditure incurred and refunds made during the year.

United Nations A/70/115

General Assembly

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26 June 2015

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Seventieth session
Item 98 (p) of the preliminary list*
General and complete disarmament: the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing to you with regard to the second open-ended meeting of governmental experts on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which I had the honour of chairing in New York from 1 to 5 June 2015.

The expert-level meeting considered the following issues: the implications of recent developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design for effective marking, record-keeping and tracing; practical steps to ensure the continued and enhanced effectiveness of national marking, record-keeping and tracing systems in the light of such developments, including ways to support the transfer, uptake and effective utilization of relevant tools and technologies; the transfer of technology and equipment, as well as capacity-building, in particular training, for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons; and additional issues relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

As agreed with participants at the meeting, I have sought to capture the key points arising from the discussions during the meeting in a Chair's summary prepared under my own responsibility (see annex). It is my hope that those points will provide a record of the considerations that transpired at the meeting, and, if Member States so wish, facilitate continued deliberation on the emerging issues at future meetings held on the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

* A/70/50.

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In the light of the above, I request that the present letter and its annex be issued as a document of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, under item 98 (p) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Vlad **Lupan**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova
to the United Nations

Annex to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Second open-ended meeting of governmental experts on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, 1-5 June 2015

Summary by the Chair

A. Overview

1. In the drafting of the present summary, the Chair has taken into account discussions by States during the second open-ended meeting of governmental experts on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, expert technical presentations offered under each agenda item and the working papers of the meeting prepared by delegations, as well as presentations by international organizations and civil society organizations.

2. The Chair heard strong requests by States at the meeting to include in the summary concrete measures for taking forward the issue of recent developments in small arms and light weapons technology under the Programme of Action process. He also heard calls from States to provide initial conclusions on the ways forward to address the challenges posed by such technologies. As such, the elements have been addressed in the present summary.

3. Many considerations emerged from the discussions. They reflect that the technological divide between States means that new developments in small arms and light weapons technology affect States differently. While some States are weighing the potential implications of three-dimensional (3D) printing, many still face barriers to implementing the basic requirements of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Therefore, there was a strong emphasis at the meeting for more in-depth consideration of new and existing technologies, including in the light of international cooperation and assistance, capacity-building and the transfer of technology and knowledge.

4. States unanimously reaffirmed the validity of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, while some States indicated that additional guidance was required for the purposes of implementing the International Tracing Instrument, particularly regarding modular weapons and other new developments.

5. While the need to continue to tackle existing challenges was recognized, there was general agreement that, in addressing new developments in technology, States were looking to ensure that they were well prepared to address issues that might become challenges in the future, thus ensuring that the international community remained ever-ready and ahead of the curve in addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

6. The present summary outlines core elements as they were discussed during the meeting. The summary was prepared by the Chair under his own responsibility and reflects his interpretation of the main points under discussion. It does not represent a full record of all the issues discussed during the week, nor does it reproduce the national positions of delegations.

B. Consideration of the implications of recent developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design for effective marking, record-keeping and tracing

How to mark materials

7. It was stated that until the third quarter of the twentieth century, essential parts of small arms were generally made of steel. Since then, aluminium, titanium and other metals had come into use, and polymers had been introduced in the mid-1960s as a cost-efficient method of manufacturing predominantly handgun frames.

8. Polymers were currently being used more often in the production of handgun frames and some long-arm receivers. They had become a mainstream method of manufacture within the industry. Polymers provided lower cost, lighter weight, resistance to moisture, ergonomic design and thermal neutrality. They offered less tensile strength than steel or aluminium, however, and were more susceptible to accidental damage. Polymers were cheaper in general, but it was more expensive to customize them to specific marking requirements under the International Tracing Instrument.

9. At the meeting, States considered the implications for the effective marking of polymer frames used in small arms production. They noted that durable marking, as prescribed in paragraph 7 of the International Tracing Instrument, was more difficult to achieve in the case of polymers, especially after the time of manufacture, for example, at the time of import.

10. Laser marking and micro-percussion (dot peen) were marking methods considered in the context of polymer frames. States noted that the cost of laser marking was relatively high, while in the experience of some delegations neither method presented a sufficiently durable option for marking polymer weapons. The ability to recover laser or dot peen marks that had been erased or altered was also very limited.

11. In order to ensure that a polymer frame weapon received a durable marking, one option recommended was to use a traditional stamping method of marking on metal parts of the weapon, such as the barrel or the bolt. That option, however, did not comply with paragraph 10 of the International Tracing Instrument as the components (barrel and bolt) were not essential structural core components of the weapon.

12. Another option was to require all manufacturers to insert a metal tag or plate in the polymer frame. Although some States noted that it was possible, in some cases, for an arms trafficker to easily remove such a tag, States considered the suggestion of embedding the metal tag in such a way that it could not be removed without damaging the frame.

13. Some States pointed out that the use of metal tags did not necessarily resolve the difficulty of marking polymer frame firearms after the time of manufacture, as there might be insufficient space on the metal tag for such markings. Although manufacturers could leave some space on the metal tag for post-manufacture markings, space might still be insufficient if the arm was imported into several countries. One of the follow-up suggestions was to place an additional unmarked metal tag for the purposes of post-manufacture marking.

14. Another partial solution was for the manufacturer to include the import marking during time of manufacture, at least in cases in which the end user was known at the time of manufacture. Some States also raised the question of whether a specially designated area on a weapon could be ensured during manufacture for durable marking, using dot peen or another type of marking.

15. States noted that, while the utmost should be done to mark small arms and light weapons durably, in line with the International Tracing Instrument, criminals intent on doing so could often remove any compliant markings.

16. Several States called for further consultations with manufacturers on issues relating to weapons marking, including regarding guidance on cost-effective options. While they noted that some details of implementation should be left to producers, they stressed that it was the responsibility of Governments to develop the applicable rules in that area.

Where to mark modular weapons

17. As national armed forces sought to prepare for a wide range of operational scenarios, they were driving demand for the development and production of modular weapons featuring a core, or fixed, component around which most other components of the rifle could be changed, allowing for fundamental changes in the weapon's configuration and even, in some cases, its calibre.

18. The fact that modular weapons could be fitted with different components, including from other weapons, would result in different serial numbers appearing on the same weapon, increasing the risk of misidentification.

19. At the meeting, experts indicated in their presentations that, with the advent of modular weapons, the question of where best to mark a weapon had become increasingly important. Paragraph 10 of the International Tracing Instrument prescribed the application of a unique marking to an essential or structural component of the weapon, such as the frame and/or receiver, and encouraged the marking of other parts of the weapon, such as the barrel and/or slide or cylinder.

20. It was pointed out, however, that some weapons had split receivers, which made it more difficult to identify the essential or structural component for the purposes of unique marking. For some modular weapons, the essential or structural component was the upper receiver, which could have a marked changing barrel or a non-removable barrel, while for others it was the lower receiver. A challenge in that regard might be that many States had not decided at the national level which component constituted the essential or structural component.

21. Several States suggested that the original manufacturer of a modular weapon could determine which part of the weapon was the essential or structural component. That component would serve as the "control component" of the weapon

and would therefore receive the unique markings prescribed in paragraph 8 of the International Tracing Instrument. At the same time, only the markings on the control component would be used to create the record for the weapon.

22. There were several proposals regarding the marking of modular weapons. In the view of some States, the markings on the control component could be preceded by the number "(1)", with the markings on other components of the weapon preceded by the number "(2) ...", in order to distinguish the control component from the weapon's other components. Some States proposed that only the control component be marked, while others saw no problem in continuing to mark the non-control components of a modular weapon, provided it was clear which component served as the control component, in essence representing the weapon for the purposes of tracing. Again, States stressed that it was the responsibility of Governments to develop the applicable rules in that area.

C. Consideration of practical steps to ensure the continued and enhanced effectiveness of national marking, record-keeping and tracing systems in the light of developments, including ways to support the transfer, uptake and effective utilization of relevant tools and technologies

Potential challenges to production

23. It was stated that three-dimensional (3D) printing, or "additive manufacturing" technology, had been used mainly in architecture, industrial design, biotechnology and aerospace. In 3D printing, a machine read the design from a 3D-printable file and laid down successive layers of liquid, powder, paper or sheet material to build the model from a series of cross sections. The layers were joined or automatically fused to create the final shape.

24. In recent years, 3D printing technology had been used for making weapons on some occasions, first using polymers and then also using metals, although the reliability of a weapon produced in that way was not very high currently. That might change as technology progressed, while currently a printed weapon that could fire a single shot or more than 10 shots already posed a threat.

25. Experts pointed out that the manufacture of a 3D-printed weapon required no small amount of resources and time. At the same time, the private assembling of a 3D printer and its use for the production of a functioning weapon had already been shown to be possible.

26. A potential challenge relating to 3D-printed firearms was the greater ease with which such weapons could be smuggled past many standard screening mechanisms, in particular metal detectors. Some tests had shown that 3D-printed weapons, even when containing metal elements, had passed undetected through traditional walk-through metal detectors, although they had been detected with X-ray scanners, which were used at airports.

27. States further heard from experts in their presentations that specialized high-end 3D printers had a high associated cost of $500,000 to $1 million, putting them out of the current reach of most individuals. Technological improvements would

likely decrease the cost of high-end 3D printers. Low-end printers, on the other hand, cost upwards of $1,500.

28. Some States highlighted that they had already put in place measures to mitigate the risks associated with the 3D printing of weapons. Such measures included laws prohibiting making 3D weapon designs available on the Internet, instituting national awareness-raising programmes targeted at 3D printer manufacturers on the potential risks and ensuring export licences were in place for 3D printers.

29. Given that 3D printers themselves could potentially be used for printing illicit weapons, States also highlighted the need to pay attention to the resale of such printers.

Existing and new practices in marking, record-keeping and tracing

30. Paragraph 8 of the International Tracing Instrument required that unique markings be applied to small arms and light weapons at the time of manufacture, including the name of the manufacturer, the country of manufacture and the serial number, or any alternative unique user-friendly marking with simple geometric symbols in combination with a numeric and/or alphanumeric code, which would permit ready identification by all States of the country of manufacture. The Instrument also required, to the extent possible, that appropriate simple markings be made on each imported weapon that would permit the identification of the country of import and, where possible, the year of import.

31. Under this agenda item, States heard from experts regarding current and effective methods for marking weapons. With the partial exception of polymer frame weapons, traditional methods such as dot peen, engraving and hand stamping continued to meet most requirements.

32. Such methods could also be a solution in cases in which challenges were associated with the potential breakdown of marking machines, or for the logistical challenges of transporting the machines to different locations. It would also be appropriate to consider such scenarios in corresponding international assistance programmes.

33. New technologies (for example, microdot and nanotechnologies for tracing) had recently entered the market. However, the technologies were not visible to the naked eye and, while they would not replace traditional marking methods owing to the International Tracing Instrument requirement for easily readable markings that were conspicuous without technical aids or tools, they could complement traditional marking methods by creating hidden marks that were difficult to find and erase.

34. States also considered micro-stamping technology that, for instance, enabled a mark to be imprinted on an ammunition cartridge by the firing pin when the weapon was fired, with the aim of enhancing tracing. Experts highlighted that the technology was easily defeated by erasing the mark if found or by replacing the entire firing pin. Although not a primary marking technology, if desired, micro-stamping could be used in addition to other types of marking.

35. States highlighted that, beyond the marking of weapons, the accurate recording of such marks — even by hand — was key, as, in the end, that was what could help to enable a successful trace.

Stockpile management: new methods for traditional tasks

36. Under the Programme of Action, Member States undertook to ensure that their armed and security forces established adequate and detailed standards and procedures relating to the management and security of their stocks of small arms and light weapons. Those standards and procedures were to include physical security measures, control of access to stocks, inventory management and accounting control, and security, accounting and control of small arms and light weapons held or transported by operational units or authorized personnel.

37. Experts shared national practices and regulations relating to stockpile management, including the marking, record-keeping and tracing of weapons, and in that regard considered barcodes, radio frequency identification and biometrics for the purposes of electronically identifying stored items, collecting data on them and enabling the data to be entered automatically into record-keeping systems.

38. Some States shared their practice of using Bluetooth and other technologies to support the inventory management of their stockpiles. Among other things, such technologies enabled the real-time tracking of inventoried items, for example, from manufacturer to storage and from storage to the individual users.

39. In a similar vein, States also considered the usability of radio frequency identification and biometric technologies in limiting access to the weapon to authorized users only. States considered that, for armed and security forces, this, together with Global Positioning System tracking technologies, might create operational challenges that could put personnel at risk. At the same time, some States noted that the application of such technologies to civilian-owned weapons could be a possibility in the future for those who wished to use it.

D. Transfer of technology and equipment, as well as capacity-building, in particular training, for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument

International cooperation and assistance: needs and challenges

40. A recurring theme at the meeting was the technical divide between States that did not have or use new technologies and those that did. It was emphasized that the traditional methods of marking, record-keeping and tracing were often entirely adequate and reliable. States considered international cooperation and assistance, including the transfer of technology and equipment, to be a central component for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

41. States heard from expert presenters that, in the provision of assistance, key issues included taking into account the national priorities of beneficiary countries and, crucially, involving national authorities in the entire cycle of project implementation, beginning with the planning and design and continuing to the implementation and assessment phases. Among other things, such involvement would facilitate a more efficient transfer of relevant knowledge to the beneficiary country.

42. The sustainability of assistance, including the development of a regulatory environment, and the transfer of knowledge were emphasized, along with the need to take into account the local environment, including the provision of training in local languages. The need for an agreement of terms between donors and beneficiary countries was also highlighted. Recurring costs, such as training, electricity and fuel, and possibilities for regional harmonization, including the provision of compatible equipment, should be considered.

43. It was underscored that coordination remained a very important issue to be addressed in the provision of international assistance, as there were often several donor countries, international or regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, each with different projects, providing assistance in the same country. States highlighted the need to ensure regular coordination meetings between assistance providers at the country level, including through the United Nations, and including in the early project planning phase to prevent duplication.

44. Some States suggested to increase and direct the cooperation efforts through the regional centres of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, which would help to share experience and adjust it to national individual demands.

45. It was noted that regional and subregional organizations had an important role to play, upon request, in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, including in the coordination of assistance. States were also encouraged to cooperate closely with regional and subregional organizations as a matter of good practice, given their particular knowledge of the countries and the circumstances of the relevant region or subregion.

46. It was highlighted that international assistance was a partnership in which donors and beneficiaries should work closely together. Donor States highlighted that they faced some challenges in the provision of assistance and urged that the consideration of regulations, structures, infrastructure and support mechanisms, including adequate national personnel management practices, take place in recipient States.

International cooperation and assistance: trust funds

47. States considered the question of strengthening the mechanisms for the provision of assistance under the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

48. There were calls for the establishment of a United Nations trust fund dedicated to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. Some States also suggested additional modalities for the trust fund, such as funding through the regular budget of the United Nations, while others did not agree with that option, proposing voluntary funding mechanisms instead. States also suggested the establishment of similar trust funds at the regional level, through the regional centres of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. There were also calls for a database of donor resources.

49. Some States highlighted the existence of the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, through which a group of donors provided for the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as the Programme of Action. States in a position to do so were urged to contribute to existing trust fund arrangements, including the Trust Facility.

E. Additional issues relating to implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument

50. Issues raised under this agenda item, and previously introduced by delegations, included:

(a) Promotion of a culture of peace;

(b) Strengthening of the implementation of existing provisions of the International Tracing Instrument and the Programme of Action;

(c) Awareness-raising and training in affected areas;

(d) Strengthening border controls and cross-border cooperation;

(e) Ammunition;

(f) Craft production of small arms and light weapons;

(g) Direct State control over transfers of small arm and light weapons, including brokering;

(h) Unlicensed manufacturing of small arms and light weapons;

(i) Re-export of small arms and light weapons produced under foreign licence;

(j) Licensing of the manufacture of small arms and light weapons as a matter of intellectual property;

(k) Transfer of weapons to non-State armed groups;

(l) Synergies between relevant instruments, including linkages between the Programme of Action and the Arms Trade Treaty;

(m) Security Council resolutions 2117 (2013) and 2220 (2015) on the issue of small arms and light weapons.

F. Initial conclusions and recommendations

Materials

51. States noted that some traditional methods of marking weapons were not suitable for marking polymer weapons. Although laser marking could be used, it was more expensive than other methods and did not yield a durable (recoverable) mark. Other potential solutions to the marking of polymer weapons included the insertion of a metal plate or tag in the polymer weapon and the stamping of durable marks on such plates or tags, as already done by some manufacturers. When the end user of a weapon was known, manufacturers could also put import markings on it at the time of manufacture. It would be interesting to further explore, with manufacturers, the idea of inserting an additional metal tag for post-manufacture markings. Further guidance on cost-effective options for the marking of polymer weapons might be considered.

Modular weapons

52. States noted that the part of the modular weapon that was the essential or structural component (and thus bore the serial number of the weapon for record-keeping and tracing purposes) needed to be clearly identifiable. Such a component could be marked with a number "(1)" just before the serial number to make it easily recognizable. Although modular weapons were not yet found in many States, further guidance on the marking, record-keeping and tracing of modular weapons might be considered.

Production

53. States noted that although the use of 3D-printing technology to manufacture small arms and light weapons was still in its infancy, it had the potential to pose serious challenges to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. In particular, as the costs of hardware, software and printing materials declined, there was a risk that the technology would become more attractive to criminals. Further consideration of ways of strengthening controls over 3D printing technology might be required in order to prevent illegal applications of the technology.

Marking, record-keeping and tracing

54. Equipment required consistent care and maintenance, which could be a challenge. In many cases, traditional marking methods offered the most cost-effective solution for the marking, record-keeping and tracing of weapons. If barriers to effective implementation existed for a pen-and-paper approach to record-keeping, those barriers might also exist should sophisticated technology be emplaced, and might be tackled first. New marking technologies, however, could provide an additional level of support in tracing, where their implementation was possible.

Stockpile management

55. A differentiation was made between technologies used for tracing in accordance with the International Tracing Instrument and technologies used for stockpile and inventory management. Radio frequency identification and other tracking technologies were notably used more for the latter purpose currently. Some States mentioned the desirability of the creation of adequate and sensible safe storage requirements for weapons owned by civilians, taking into the account the capacity of the local community to do so.

International cooperation and assistance

56. Further attention needed to be given to the issue of international cooperation and assistance, including the transfer of technology, particularly in the light of the discussions at the meeting of new developments in small arms and light weapons technology. The modalities of international cooperation and assistance should be further enhanced and could be a topic to be considered at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

57. States continued to observe the need to increase the utility of reporting, in particular by using national reports to identify implementation trends and challenges and to enhance the matching of assistance needs with available resources.

Trust funds

58. At the Sixth Biennial Meeting, States could consider the adequacy of existing voluntary trust fund mechanisms for international cooperation and assistance, including the transfer of technology, as well as how they might wish engage those mechanisms for the more effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

59. Noting the presentation provided by the Office for Disarmament Affairs at the meeting on options for enhanced funding and training, States reiterated their request for the Secretariat to fulfil its mandate in the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States by presenting the following for consideration at the Sixth Biennial Meeting:

- Options for the enhanced funding of activities relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, including trust fund arrangements
- The establishment of programmes for the training of relevant officials nominated by their respective Governments in areas relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument

60. States also requested the Secretariat to fulfil its mandate in the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting to carry out a comprehensive study on the adequacy, effectiveness and sustainability of financial and technical assistance, including the transfer of technology and equipment, particularly to developing countries since 2001, for the full implementation of the Programme of Action, and to submit the study for consideration before the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States, in 2016. The Secretariat was asked to issue a note verbale to States requesting their inputs for the documents. States were urged to submit such inputs in order to support the Secretariat in fulfilling its mandate.

Looking towards the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

61. At the second open-ended meeting of governmental experts, States raised specific issues and suggested that these be taken up at the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States. The issues included:

(a) Consideration of the need for further agreed guidance for marking polymer weapons; the marking, record-keeping and tracing of modular weapons; and strengthening 3D printing regulations in the context of 3D weapon printing, including further dialogue with industry on the above issues;

(b) Consideration of enhancing the modalities relating to international cooperation and assistance, including the transfer of technology;

(c) Consideration of an enhanced role for regional and subregional organizations in international cooperation and assistance and the exchange of information;

(d) Consideration of the further utility of national reports submitted on the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument for the provision of information on matching needs with resources;

(e) Consideration of existing trust fund modalities for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, and whether the setting up of other trust funds was required.

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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa from July 2014 to June 2015.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to assist, upon request, Member States and intergovernmental and civil society organizations in Africa to promote peace, security and disarmament.

In response to the continued challenge to peace, security and stability posed by the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in Africa, in particular in Central Africa, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, the Centre focused its work on providing, upon request, assistance to States to combat the illicit trafficking in such weapons and to reform their security sectors. The Centre assisted Member States in their implementation of subregional instruments to control small arms and light weapons and provided training to civilian authorities, including national commissions on small arms and light weapons, defence and security forces and United Nations peacekeeping mission personnel in the area of combating illicit small arms and light weapons. The Centre also partnered with national and international non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations to promote the Arms Trade Treaty.

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The Centre provided technical assistance to Member States in their implementation of instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, especially the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The Centre facilitated the provision of assistance to several African States in preparing their first national reports on the implementation of the resolution and on the next steps to be taken by those States under the resolution.

The Centre continued to provide substantive and technical support on disarmament issues to the States members of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at their ministerial and governmental expert meetings.

The Centre strengthened its own capacity to respond to requests from Member States in Africa in the fields of disarmament, peace and security through enhanced project development and resource mobilization. The Secretary-General wishes to thank those Member States and other institutions that made financial and in-kind contributions to the Centre, enabling it to fulfil its mandate during the reporting period, and calls upon all Member States and other stakeholders to continue to make contributions.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/74, the General Assembly noted with appreciation the tangible achievements and impact of the assistance provided by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and welcomed its contribution to disarmament, peace and security on the continent.

2. The present report is submitted pursuant to the request of the General Assembly for the Secretary-General to submit a report at its seventieth session on the implementation of the resolution. It covers the activities of the Centre from July 2014 to June 2015. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre is contained in the annex.

II. Functioning and mandate of the Centre

3. The Centre was established in 1986 in Lomé pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G. It functions on the basis of existing resources within the Secretariat and of voluntary contributions that Member States and other donors may offer.

4. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to implement its programme of work in the following main areas: peace and security; conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons; weapons of mass destruction; information and outreach; and cooperation and partnerships with regional and subregional organizations and other entities.

III. Objectives and activities of the Centre

5. The Centre provides assistance, upon request, to Member States, the African Union and other intergovernmental organizations in the promotion of disarmament, peace and security in Africa through capacity-building and training, technical assistance, research and information-sharing. It also works in partnership with academic and research institutions and civil society organizations in the implementation of its programmes, projects and other activities linked to disarmament, peace and security. Owing to the specific nature of security issues in Africa, the Centre continued to place emphasis on activities linked to the prevention of the illicit trafficking in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa and on security sector reform, with the goals of reducing armed conflict and armed violence and enhancing the effectiveness and accountability of security institutions.

6. The Centre assisted African Member States in the preparation of their first national reports on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and in the development of voluntary national implementation action plans, raised awareness of weapons of mass destruction and assisted States in the region in implementing related disarmament instruments, such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (Biological Weapons Convention).

A. Peace and security

7. The Centre developed several projects contributing to the implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel through technical assistance to improve small arms control and physical security and stockpile management. It actively participated in the inter-agency coordination and exchange of information efforts led by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, providing expert advice to Member States, United Nations missions and other stakeholders on issues relating to disarmament, in particular weapons stockpile management, safety and security. The Centre also initiated activities to strengthen the capacity of the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Mali, in particular in the implementation of a national action plan on small arms and the holding of training on small arms control, which was also attended by personnel from the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).

8. The Centre initiated an assessment survey of the small arms situation in the Sahel region and neighbouring countries and began physical security and stockpile management activities to reduce the risk of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and ammunition in the Sahel. The activities took into account the discussions at consultative meetings on the security situation in the Sahel and the Maghreb held in Paris (October 2014), Dakar (February 2015), Wilton Park, Steyning, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (February and April 2015) and Addis Ababa (May 2015).

9. As part of its contribution to implementing the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel, the Centre worked with the national commissions on small arms and light weapons of Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger on aspects relating to conventional arms and ammunition management. Activities were conducted in coordination with the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), MINUSMA, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel.

10. The Centre provided substantive support to the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Question in Central Africa at its thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth and fortieth ministerial meetings, held in Malabo (July-August 2014), Bujumbura (December 2014) and Luanda (June 2015). The Centre updated the 11 States members of the Committee on disarmament developments in the subregion, on the progress towards the entry into force of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (Kinshasa Convention) and on the cooperation between the United Nations system in Central Africa and the Committee in the context of peace and security.

11. In January 2015, Cameroon ratified the Kinshasa Convention, becoming the fifth State party. The Convention will enter into force 30 days after the date of deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. The Secretary-General reiterates his call upon the Member States of the region to ratify the Convention.

12. At the request of the Standing Advisory Committee, the Centre undertook to examine the adverse consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons for maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and will report to the Committee thereon.

13. The Centre provided technical and substantive input to the assessment mission of the Secretary-General requested by the Security Council on the progress of Liberia in meeting the conditions set out in Council resolution 1521 (2003). In that context, the Centre provided recommendations to the Government for it to improve the physical security and management of weapons stockpiles.

14. In the lead-up to the presidential elections in Togo and as part of its programme on security sector reform, the Centre, in coordination with the United Nations country team, provided technical expertise and advice on security sector reform and small arms control to the Togolese defence and security forces. The activity was undertaken in partnership with the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Hanns Seidel Foundation. The Centre promoted the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials in the lead-up to and during the elections and published an updated version of its guide to maintaining law and order during electoral periods for security forces and services. The Centre also developed and piloted a training course on weapons and ammunition management during crowd control situations. The training materials drew upon elements of the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and the International Small Arms Control Standards.

15. The guide and training materials were shared with the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and with the participants in a high-level meeting on elections and stability in Central Africa held in Libreville in May 2015.

B. Small arms and light weapons

16. The Centre supported African Member States in implementing international and regional instruments to combat the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons by providing assistance in implementing regional and national action plans on small arms and in strengthening the capacity of Governments and civil society organizations in the field of small arms control.

17. As an observer member of the African Union-Regions Steering Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the Centre continued to work closely with the African Union Commission and provided substantive advice to the Steering Committee on the implementation of the African Union Strategy on the Control of Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the African Union Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Capacity Programme. The Centre provided substantive expertise to the African Union in the drafting of a regional compendium and training manual on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. It also supported the implementation of subregional instruments on efforts to combat illicit small arms and light weapons through the provision of expert and technical advice to African regional and subregional organizations.

18. The Centre continued to support the African Union and its member States, in addition to subregional organizations, in the implementation of the African Union Strategy, which is an effective framework to improve the coordination of activities aimed at combating and preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects on the continent. The Centre also provided substantive support to the Steering Committee with regard to the African Union-European Union project to fight against illicit firearms in Africa in the implementation of the second phase of the project.

19. Under a United Nations-European Union joint assistance programme on small arms, the Centre provided assistance to Burkina Faso, the Niger and Sierra Leone for the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. Marking machines were provided and training sessions were organized on marking and record-keeping in relation to small arms and light weapons. The project was carried out in coordination with UNODC. The Centre also conducted training on the marking and registration of small arms and light weapons in Liberia in cooperation with the United Nations Mission in Liberia and the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons. With a view to promoting South-South cooperation and to making use of existing capacity in the subregion, the activities were implemented with the technical support of experts from the national commissions on small arms and light weapons of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana.

20. In its sustained effort to support the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Mali, the Centre provided technical assistance in the implementation of the national action plan on small arms and light weapons by conducting capacity-building and training of trainers on arms control jointly for representatives of the Government and MINUSMA. The Centre piloted a course on weapons identification and tracking and conducted an inter-institutional training course on small arms and light weapons control in Africa for national authorities and United Nations peacekeepers. In addition, using its civil society training manual, the Centre conducted capacity-building activities and provided technical support to empower national civil society organizations to tackle the proliferation of arms in Mali through national awareness-raising programmes. Building on the results of previous phases of the project, the Centre began to carry out a third phase of activities focusing on the marking and registration of government-owned and civilian-held weapons and the development of standard operating procedures for the management of imported weapons.

21. The Centre provided support to the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Togo in the marking of civilian-held weapons in accordance with the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. The activity was accompanied by an awareness-raising campaign for the public and a high-level briefing for the Government. In total, 9,064 civilian-held arms were marked and registered.

22. The Centre, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the International Small Arms Control Standards Implementation Support Unit, conducted a regional training session for officials from East African Member States and United Nations peacekeeping missions on the International

Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool, a digital platform allowing experts to evaluate specific needs and accord priority to assistance for small arms control programmes.

23. In cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States, the Centre worked on a legislation harmonization guide for the Kinshasa Convention. The Centre also provided substantive support to the Governments of Mali, Nigeria and Togo in reviewing their small arms legislation. In addition, it contributed its technical expertise to the first independent expert meeting on the establishment of the ECOWAS register and database on small arms and light weapons, organized by the ECOWAS Commission in April 2015 in Abuja.

24. Those activities also led to the development and/or publication of new and updated material, including an inter-institutional training course on small arms and light weapons control in Africa, national standard operating procedures for Côte d'Ivoire on physical security and stockpile management and a training manual to raise the awareness and build the capacity of civil society organizations with regard to practical disarmament and peacebuilding in West Africa.

C. Promoting the Arms Trade Treaty

25. The Centre continued to advocate the broad participation of African Member States in the Arms Trade Treaty. Together with civil society organizations, parliamentarians and international partners, it focused on increasing understanding of the Treaty, promoting ratification and initiating implementation in the States parties. Its efforts included a workshop for African small island developing States held in Lomé in May 2015 and, in cooperation with the ECOWAS Commission, the preparation of a seminar on the synergies and complementarities between the ECOWAS Convention and the Treaty, to be held in July 2015. In cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Centre began mapping bilateral and multilateral Treaty-related assistance and cooperation activities in sub-Saharan Africa. To strengthen understanding of the contribution of the Treaty to preventing and combating gender-based violence, the Centre provided technical expertise to a regional seminar on violence against women organized by the association representing the international French-speaking police community.

26. The Centre supported several activities organized by regional, subregional and non-governmental organizations and other United Nations agencies. They included a training session for parliamentarians of Burkina Faso organized by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons, seminars organized by the Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, a seminar for non-governmental organizations in the ECOWAS region organized by UNODC, expert and outreach meetings in the framework of a European Union Treaty outreach project and an African Union meeting in preparation for the first session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty, in addition to several training sessions and seminars organized by civil society organizations and academic institutions. The Centre continues to engage with Member States and regional and subregional organizations on the Treaty by contributing its expertise to discussions.

D. Weapons of mass destruction

27. The Centre supported Member States in their efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors. Having received assistance from the Centre through its project entitled "Enhancing the participation of African Member States in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004): towards the tenth anniversary", three African Member States each submitted their first report on the implementation of the resolution and two submitted additional reports. Responding to assistance requests, the Centre joined the experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in country visits to Malawi (May 2015), Senegal (June 2015), Togo (June 2015) and Zambia (April 2015) to provide related assistance, in particular discussing future steps to be taken by those States in the implementation of the resolution. Additional African Member States have announced their interest in inviting the Committee and its experts and the Centre to conduct similar country visits.

23. The Centre also supported the African Union Commission in the organization of a training workshop for African national points of contact and a consultation with African subregional organizations on capacity-building for their member States in the areas of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear safety and security, held in Addis Ababa in November 2014.

29. In support of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Centre supported the Governments of Benin, Burkina Faso and Uganda in strengthening national capacity to implement their obligations under the Convention, notably regarding confidence-building measures, legislative and administrative measures, awareness-raising and the creation of a code of conduct on biosafety and biosecurity standards.

E. Information and outreach

30. As part of its efforts to make disarmament materials available to an increasing number of States in the region, the Centre translated into French the documents of the Office for Disarmament Affairs entitled "Guidelines — How to establish and maintain gun-free zones" and *Action for Disarmament: 10 Things You Can Do!* with the support of the United Nations Volunteers online service. In cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Centre is working on a practitioner's handbook on disarmament in Africa.

31. The Centre continued to implement its communications strategy with the objective of improving outreach and interaction with Member States, regional and subregional organizations, civil society organizations and the public at large regarding its work and priorities. Briefings for the diplomatic corps were organized in Lomé (January 2015), Bamako (February 2015) and Accra (March 2015) to inform diplomats about the work of the Centre and raise their awareness of current disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation challenges in Africa.

32. The Centre's electronic newsletter, "UNREC Focus", is distributed to more than 5,500 global subscribers, providing information about regional disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation issues and the activities and achievements of the Centre. Furthermore, new interactive features, including a document database, and

links to its social media presence were added to the Centre's website. From July 2014 to June 2015, the website recorded 67,168 visitors.

33. As part of its outreach activities during the implementation of its small arms marking projects in Mali and Togo, the Centre conducted an awareness-raising campaign involving local singers and storytellers and the distribution of traditional West African *pagnes* bearing messages on the dangers posed by the destabilizing circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

34. In commemoration of the centenary of the First World War, the Centre, in collaboration with the University of Lomé and the French Institute in Lomé, organized a panel discussion on the use of chemical weapons during the War following the screening of two documentary films, one entitled *Ich liebe Dich* and one on the history of the use of chemical weapons and the creation of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. To mark the first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, the Centre, in collaboration with the Goethe Institute in Lomé and two non-governmental organizations, Association les messagers de la jarre de paix and Visions solidaires, screened a film entitled *Nuclear Holocaust*, which was followed by a public debate.

35. The six international and national United Nations Volunteers working at the Centre contributed to the promotion of volunteerism in peace and security by participating in activities for International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development and sharing their disarmament experiences in national and international paper and electronic publications. The Centre and the United Nations Volunteers programme cooperated in highlighting peace, security and disarmament issues at the United Nations Volunteers Partnerships Forum 2014 (September-October 2014).

IV. Operational situation of the Centre

A. Financial situation

36. The Centre was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/151 G on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions. In 2014, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for the Centre were received in the amount of $575,701. Information on the status of the Trust Fund in 2014 is contained in the annex. Additional contributions were also received during the first half of 2015.

37. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Togo, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, in addition to the Economic Community of Central African States, the European Union, the donor States to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, for their financial contributions. He also wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Mali for their in-kind contributions.

B. Staffing

38. The regular budget of the United Nations currently funds the posts of the Director, a Political Affairs Officer and two national support staff. Project staff continue to be funded through voluntary contributions. During the reporting period, the Centre enhanced its cooperation with the United Nations Volunteers programme. The Secretary-General wishes to thank the Government of Finland for supporting the cost of an international United Nations Volunteer, the Government of Germany for the funding of an Associate Expert in legal affairs and the Government of the United States for supporting the cost of a national United Nations Volunteer through the Trust Fund for Global and Regional Disarmament Activities in support of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

C. Capacity-building for United Nations staff members

39. The Centre took the opportunity of visits by international experts to train its staff in Lomé and interested staff from United Nations departments, offices and agencies from the region. Staff participated in training on the International Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool, organized in-house, on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, organized by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and on supervisory skills, organized by the World Food Programme, in addition to online training provided by the Office of Human Resources Management and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The Centre offered training on small arms and light weapons security and management to civilian and uniformed personnel of MINUSMA and, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, conducted pilot training on the International Small Arms Control Standards Assessment Tool with staff from United Nations field presences in Africa.

V. Conclusion

40. During the reporting period, the Centre increased its activities, with the support of donors, to provide assistance to African Member States in relation to peace, security and disarmament initiatives and enhanced its collaboration with partners with a view to achieving synergies in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation objectives in Africa.

41. The Centre provided assistance to Member States, upon request, in combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons and in implementing various instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Furthermore, the Centre engaged in activities to promote the Arms Trade Treaty and conducted outreach initiatives to raise awareness of disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

42. The considerable increase in requests for assistance from Member States and intergovernmental organizations illustrates the relevance of the Centre's work in the field of arms regulation, disarmament, non-proliferation and security in the region. Building on its expertise in the respective areas and lessons learned, the Centre

continues to develop and implement new projects and activities that meet the priority needs of Member States on issues within the Centre's mandate.

43. In carrying out its programme and activities, the Centre worked with a wide range of actors and strengthened its continental role by creating networks and partnerships at the pan-African and African subregional levels. The Centre also benefited from the effective partnerships that it has established and maintains with United Nations agencies and international, regional and subregional organizations, in addition to non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and civil society organizations. The ability of the Centre to coordinate with a wide range of actors and to draw on lessons learned has proved beneficial to its institutional growth. Those trends will continue as part of the Centre's efforts to maximize the utilization of resources and expertise through cooperation and sharing of experiences.

44. The Centre stands ready to continue to support Member States in tackling disarmament and non-proliferation challenges in Africa. To enable the Centre to continue its operation and fulfil its mandate effectively and comprehensively, the Secretary-General encourages all Member States and other donors to provide the Centre with the necessary financial and in-kind support.

Annex

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa for 2014*

(United States dollars)

Reserves and balance, as at 1 January 2014	**881 989**
Income	
Voluntary contributions	575 701[a]
Funds received under inter-organization arrangements	–
Interest income	3 416
Other/miscellaneous income	10 230[b]
Prior-year adjustment	(191)
Total income and prior-year adjustment	**589 155**
Expenditure	732 587
Programme support costs	95 246
Refunds to donors	444 097
Total expenditure	**1 271 930**
Reserves and balance, as at 31 December 2014	**199 214**[c]

* The status is provided provisionally pending the release of the final financial statements. The figures provided herein are therefore subject to change.

[a] During the reporting period, contributions were received from Germany ($545,654), France ($12,503) and Togo ($17,543).

[b] Represents refund of expenditure from the prior period.

[c] Consists of reserves and balance as at 1 January 2014, plus income received in 2014, less expenditure incurred during the year, plus adjustment for the reduction of 2014 expenditure.